

**TOWN OF SOUTH BETHANY
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
JULY 12, 2024
9:00 A.M.**

Meeting Called to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Dondero called the July 12, 2024, Town Council meeting to order at 9:01 a.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance and Absences

In attendance were Mayor Edie Dondero and Councilmembers Randy Bartholomew, Bob Biciocchi, Chris Keefe, Tim Shaw, and Bob Shields; Town Manager Maureen Hartman, SBPD Chief Jason Lovins, and Town Clerk Matt Amerling. Public attendees: 21. Virtual attendees: 14.

Public Comment

Mayor Dondero stated Tim Saxton withdrew his application for the vacant Town Council seat so Council will be proceeding as per the agenda in regard to the other two candidates.

Steve Chantler, 422 Tamarack Drive, stated he supports Cindy Van Horn to be chosen to fill the vacant Town Council seat.

Carolyn Bell, 307 W. 7th Street, stated she supports Ms. Van Horn to be chosen to fill the vacant Town Council seat, and thanked former Mayor Saxton for his service.

Nina Link, 114 Elizabeth Way, stated her thanks to former Mayor Tim Saxton for his years of service, as well as the SBPD for their hard work over the July 4th weekend.

Jocelyn Cenna, 408 Black Gum Drive, stated she is one of the candidates for appointment to the Planning Commission and wanted to introduce herself to Council.

Ed Bintz, 302 N. Ocean Drive, stated regarding the yearly elections, he suggests Council adopt a resolution committing to holding a candidate forum every year, and then posting candidate statements on the town's website in advance of the election. Mr. Bintz stated regarding today's Council selection, he thinks it would be more helpful to list the applicant letters on the website so the public may have a better idea of the candidates and what their stance is on a variety of issues. Lastly, Mr. Bintz stated the Council is continuing to ignore the U.S. Wind project, and per Town Resolution 1-20 (approved in February 2020), a resolution requesting that the proposed Offshore Wind Project and the Fenwick Island State Park expansion be thoroughly reviewed and studied in partnership with surrounding coastal communities, it states "whereas, based on input from its citizens, the Council is opposed to the current Wind Farm and park plans to bring power cables into Delaware from the turbines that will run through Delaware waters." It further states "let it be resolved by the Town Council that it is critical for the proposed Offshore Wind Project and State Project, State Park expansion be thoroughly reviewed and studied in partnership with surrounding coastal towns. The Council strongly requests participation in any future decisions regarding the park plans, substation, power grid, the location and size of the wind farm turbines, and impact on traffic within the surrounding community." Mr. Bintz would like to know what has happened so that the Town is ignoring this resolution. Mr. Bintz would like the Town to find out what happened with the Association of Coastal Town's (ACT) decision-making process when deciding on how to deal with

the U.S. Wind project, as well as inform the citizens of these findings so such a violation of transparency doesn't happen again.

Stephanie Bunoski, 417 Victoria Road, stated she supports Ms. Van Horn to be chosen to fill the vacant Town Council seat, and thanked former Mayor Saxton for his service.

Mayor Dondero stated she would like to switch items 3 and 4 on the agenda. Council agreed.

Presentation of Resolution 6-24, recognizing former Mayor Timothy Saxton

Mayor Dondero presented Tim Saxton with Resolution 6-24, recognizing his service as Mayor. Councilman Randy Bartholomew thanked Mr. Saxton for his wisdom and guidance.

Adoption of Minutes

Councilman Bob Biciocchi motioned to approve the June 14, 2024, Town Council meeting minutes, seconded by Councilman Bob Shields. Motion carried 6-0.

Discussion and possible action to appoint one additional member to the Planning Commission

Mayor Dondero stated two of the applicants have withdrawn, so that leaves Jocelyn Cenna as the lone applicant for the Planning Commission seat opening, which is a term of two years. Councilman Bob Shields stated he is the Planning Commission Council Point of Contact and after speaking with Ms. Cenna, he strongly recommends her for the position. Councilman Tim Shaw motioned to appoint Jocelyn Cenna to the Planning Commission; seconded by Councilman Randy Bartholomew. Motion carried 6-0.

Interviews of the following candidates applying for appointment to the vacant Town Council seat expiring May 10, 2025: Glenn Tom, Cindy Van Horn, Tim Saxton

Glenn Tom, 309 W. 7th Street, stated he holds a PhD from Stanford University in chemistry, and, as his passion is bicycling, he served on the Town's Bike & Pedestrian Safety Ad Hoc Committee for its entire two-year run. He is very interested in assisting with improving and upholding the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians in Town. Mr. Tom stated while he doesn't have as much civic experience as the other candidate, he likes to work and will carry out any tasks he is assigned to the best of his abilities. Mr. Tom has 103 patents so he's very good at "turning over stones and seeing things from a different perspective."

Cindy Van Horn, 12 S. Anchorage Avenue, stated she has 40+ years of financial experience as a CPA, having worked in public accounting and in the private industry, particularly specializing in real estate. Ms. Van Horn is currently a member of the Town's Budget & Finance Committee (B&F), which she loves and praised B&F Chairman and Council Treasurer Bartholomew, as well as Town Manager Maureen Hartman and Town Finance Director Renee McDorman. She is also the treasurer of the South Bethany Women's Club and is a volunteer at the Hope Center where she sits on the steering committee to help run the program. Ms. Van Horn stated some of her initiatives would be to work on the canal water quality because the canals as well as the bulkheads could use a little work. Another issue she is concerned about is the flooding and she is concerned about the community and its property values. She believes she could be very helpful in obtaining financing for the projects to help with these issues and she loves to help people out any way she can. Ms. Van Horn stated she would be willing to step down from her position on the B&F if she were appointed to Council.

Mayor Dondero stated Council will make its decision on who to appoint at its August 9th meeting.

Review and Discussion of possible amendments to Committee Guidelines previously submitted by the Town Solicitor

Mayor Dondero stated this item was brought up by Town Solicitor Stephani Ballard, who reviewed and made some recommendations to our committee guidelines in 2019, and the recommendations were not brought to the Council and reviewed. Solicitor Ballard has provided Council with a memo detailing her suggested changes. Councilman Bartholomew had some concerns with the proposed changes to the Budget & Finance Committee portion, and after speaking with Solicitor Ballard, they made the changes which are a part of what is presented in today's packet.

Councilman Tim Shaw stated he sees Ms. Ballard is recommending removing the grant and project application process from the guidelines and suggested that Council move them to a stand-alone document. Councilman Shaw is the one who initially proposed putting them in the guidelines because he believed committees should be made aware of how the process works, and while he does not oppose removing them and making the process its own separate document, he believes the guidelines should at least reference that document so committees will know where to look when such an issue arises. Councilman Shields stated he was surprised to see the reduction of committee members from nine down to five and would like to know the rationale for such a decision. Councilman Shields does agree with permitting business owners and owners of LLCs to join committees. Mayor Dondero stated she is not sure of Solicitor Ballard's rationale for reducing the number of committee members, but she is recommending, if Council agrees, to keep the maximum number "as is" for now, at least until next year's organization meeting when it can properly be discussed before any committee appointments. Mayor Dondero stated, regarding the committee listing changes, Solicitor Ballard didn't edit the committee's scope of work because she's trying to nitpick what our committees are doing, but rather to make sure that Council is not assigning too much authority to a committee that has non-elected representatives on it, as there are certain duties and powers of the Council that are reserved in the Charter, and we wanted to make sure that these guidelines are not in conflict with said Council duties and powers.

Mayor Dondero stated Council will not vote on these revisions today, but instead will go back and make the changes discussed today, and then review a clean, updated version for possible vote at the next meeting. Mayor Dondero stated to Council that if they have any more changes to please send them to her as soon as possible.

Leadership Reports

Mayor's Report – Report submitted. Mayor Dondero stated her thanks to the South Bethany Beach Patrol and the Public Works Department for all their hard work during the extremely busy July 4th week and enduring with grace and patience. Also, just a reminder the Beach to Bay Cottage Tour will be held on July 24 and 25, and there is a South Bethany home featured on the tour, so homeowners should please be patient with expectant traffic.

Town Manager Report – Report submitted. Town Manager Hartman thanked the South Bethany Historical Society for contributing the historic photos hanging in the Town Hall lobby.

Police Chief Report – Report submitted.

Treasurer Report – Report submitted.

Committee and Commission Reports

Budget and Finance Committee – Report submitted. The Committee had its first fiscal year meeting on June 19 and is looking to hold its next meeting on August 8.

Canal Water Quality Committee – No report submitted. The CWQ will hold its next meeting on Monday, July 15.

Charter and Code Committee – Report submitted. Town Manager Hartman sent four different sections of the Code to Charter & Code for review and revision, and he sent their recommendations to Town Manager Hartman yesterday.

Community Relations Committee – No report submitted. The next meeting will be held on August 7 at 10 a.m. The movie on the beach this year will be “Wonka,” and it is scheduled for July 30.

Planning Commission – Report submitted; first meeting was held on July 8, 2024, and the new chairman is Fred Reitzel, the vice chair is Richard Dallaire, and the secretary is Steve Gallagher. Councilman Shields stated the Planning Commission would like to change their organizational meeting from May to June due to the Town election and Council organizational meeting being held in May.

Resiliency Committee – Report submitted. Mayor Dondero stated the Town’s consultant, AECOM, is continuing to work on the York Road flood mitigation project and will hopefully be ready to present to Council and the public with some preliminary results. Mayor Dondero and Town Manager Hartman heard from the Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) that they will cover the cost of the additional work that was added to the scope of work for that project. The Resiliency Committee asked for an extra \$3,500 when it amended the scope of work, and that money was not available in the grant; however, FEMA reviewed the request and approved the additional cost, as well as provide an extra \$175 for subrecipient management costs. Lastly, she received word that the FEMA grant submitted in February for a flood mitigation study and design project in Cat Hill is going through final review. It is a \$147,000 grant which will pay for a study similar to the York Road study, but on a bigger scale in Cat Hill, to address flooding issues there. While the Town has not received the official approval letter for this grant, it did get the “soft approval,” so that is all wonderful news, and Mayor Dondero thanks Town Manager Hartman for all the work she put into this process.

Adjournment

Motion by Councilman Shields, seconded by Councilman Biciocchi, to adjourn the July 12, 2024, Town Council Regular Meeting at 10:04 a.m. Motion carried 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Council Secretary



Town Clerk

8/9/2024
Date of Approval